

The District 3 Slate

June 2005

County Supervisor Pam Slater-Price

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Pam Slater-Price

War has been declared on the junk food sold at schools. With a growing number of obese children, this is a battle society cannot afford to lose.

Concerns highlighted during the Food Summit I recently hosted are being addressed in Sacramento. AB 569 will prohibit schools from selling high-sugar and -fat foods and drinks during the breakfast and lunch periods. It passed into the Senate.

A second bill, AB 826, creates the California Farm to School Child Nutrition Improvement Program that encourages local farms to market fresh veggies and fruits to local schools.

These are steps in the right direction. As pointed out during the summit, we need to reintroduce children to fruits and vegetables, showing them they can be tasty and healthy.

Pam

County Programs Earn Watchdog's Seal Of Approval

Each year, the San Diego County Taxpayers Association hands out its Golden Watchdog and Golden Fleece awards. One recognizes innovation and prudent administration; the other chides government for wasting taxpayer dollars.

How did the County of San Diego fair this year? Fantastic! It won three Golden Watchdog awards and received high marks for protecting the public trust.

The Department of General Services won the first honor for its "Bright Ideas through Energy Efficiency" project that reduced the amount of power consumed while saving taxpayers an estimated \$1.22 million this year alone. Energy use dropped by up to 45 percent.

The program promoted the use of solar energy and photovoltaic panels, retrofitted motors with energy-efficient models, and, in the process, gave the county flexibility in purchasing its power.

The Department of Purchasing and Contracting was honored for its Electronic Reverse Auctions, a web-based competitive pricing tool that allows vendors to compete in real time to sell their goods and services. It is estimated the county saved more than \$2.5 million by using this system.

Using the program to enter bids were automotive dealers, tree-removal companies, landscapers, food brokerage companies and other vendors. By using the World Wide Web to

encourage competition, the county gets more for its dollars. For example, the county saved more than \$90,000 on its vehicle leases by getting more dealers to bid. The District Attorney's Office saved about \$8,500 in printing its quarterly publication.

The County of San Diego was the third recipient for its "Work Safe/Stay Healthy" program that found ways to reduce the workers' compensation premiums.

The county's premiums went from \$14.5 million in 1998-99 to \$24.6 million in 2002-03, a 70 percent increase. The \$10 million spent on premiums could have funded 154 positions.

Enter "Work Safe/Stay Healthy," which raised the awareness of workplace safety and reduced the number of injuries. The goal was a 5 percent reduction in injuries in one year; the county had 270 less injuries than the previous year!

In the program's first 18 months, it saved about \$3.2 million in costs. Better, the county did not have its workers' comp premiums raised in 2003-04, the first time it avoided the annual 18 percent hike. And the county expects a 12 percent reduction this year when premiums are recalculated.

These examples of fiscal responsibility are a tribute to the managers and staff who care about their jobs in serving the people of the County of San Diego.



SOLAR SAVINGS...

Supervisor Pam Slater-Price inspects the Rancho Coastal Humane Society's newly installed solar power system (above). The installation allows the non-profit organization to provide its animals with dramatically reduced costs for electricity, heat and hot water. Joining Supervisor Slater-Price on the tour (below) were Jim Silveira, president of the Rancho Coastal Humane Society, and board member Pam Cesak. Supervisor Slater-Price has been a longtime supporter of the Rancho Coastal Humane Society. Since 2001 she has awarded the organization \$140,000 from the county Community Projects grant program. In 2003 she was awarded the RCHS's "Heart of Gold" award in appreciation of her support.





What The Arts Mean To San Diego

Frank Zappa, the avant-garde musician-songwriter and one-time San Diego resident, once said that art is making something out of nothing and selling it. While there are some who would object to that statement as an endorsement of art as crass commercialism, I think it is an apt description of art's economic importance.

San Diego County is uniquely situated to become a Mecca for the arts. I see this in my role as chairwoman of the Board of Supervisors and as the 2005 chair of Bravo, which advocates on the behalf of San Diego's small- to mid-size performing arts organizations.

As a bicultural and increasingly cosmopolitan urban area with world-class hotels, resorts, and restaurants, the area is already a draw to many who are looking to experience big city California on a human scale. Part of this experience includes exposure to local artists and art performances.

Already we are home to recognized theaters, such as the Old Globe and the La Jolla Playhouse, and the San Diego Opera, one of the nation's leading com-

panies. There are also numerous dance troupes, community theaters, and music venues that offer a variety of artistic styles, genres, and encounters to interested patrons of varying means.

In my State of the County address, I stressed the need to recognize the arts as an important component to the county's growth and development. While I would like to see this process hastened, I be-

lieve that the eventual rise of art in San Diego is inevitable.

Cultural tourism, the spending on food, hotels and recreation that goes along with a ticket to a performance, has simply become too potent a factor for local businesses to ignore.

In fact, a study has shown that overnight visitors who travel to San Diego to see a major show spend approximately \$246 daily. That contrasts to the \$69 to \$119 spent by non-cultural visitors.

The challenge now is to find innovative ways of supporting the evolution of San Diego County as a major destination for arts patrons. The foundation is in place, but it is our job to build on it.



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Polluted Oceans Are Very Costly

We know it is not safe to swim or surf in polluted waters. But now, thanks to a study conducted in Orange County, we know the cost of health-related expenses that occur when ocean waters fill with bacteria on those beach-perfect days.

The study by researchers at UC Irvine quantify the annual cost to be \$3 million for medical expenses and lost wages when ocean lovers enjoy beaches where the bacterial levels are within state health standards. The study was conducted at south Huntington Beach and north Newport Beach; researchers stressed the findings would compare to any beach in California.

A person infected with a stomach ailment on average ended up paying \$36.58; respiratory disease soared to \$76.76. An eye infection cost \$27.31 while an ear infection ran \$37.86. (Researchers note that some infected people do no visit a doctor or miss time at work.) The report can be found in the June issue of the Journal of Environmental Management. The study notes that data was discarded for the days when the beach was closed due to poor water quality.

While some in academia and government question the validity of the study, there is no denying that polluted coastal waters impact a community. Urban runoff is a real problem that needs to be resolved. It impacts Mission Bay and popular beaches. This study restores balance to the debate on the economics and necessity of clean water.

The real solution to be dilemma is to work together in a collaborative manner to find cost-effective solutions to prevent urban runoff and minimize sewage spills. The burden cannot be solely placed on future development. Nor can it be ignored. The ramifications are too great; the cost to our society, in lost productivity, increased medical expenses, and loss of tourism must be considered.

Enjoying our aquatic wonders is part of our quality-of-life. Surfing or swimming in the ocean should not mean adding a trip to the local hospital or a doctor's visit.

AROUND THE THIRD DISTRICT

Investing in the organizations that invest in improving our neighborhoods is one way to enhance the quality of life that gives the Third District its unique sense of community. The Board of Supervisors approved my requests as outlined below:

CARDIFF BY THE SEA

Surf's up for Machado Classic

North County's surf tradition is alive and well! I earmarked \$5,000 to promote and stage the annual Machado Surf Classic, put on by the Cardiff-by-the-Sea Chamber of Commerce. This major tourist attraction and top-flight sporting event reinforces the coastal communities as a surf Mecca and tourism destination.



DEL MAR

New signage planned for library

A library gives its community a sense of purpose and achievement. I awarded the Del Mar Friends of the Library \$10,000 for the replacement of exterior signage and to provide funding for children's programs and major author events.

Promoting a friendly environment

Del Mar is defined by its quaint business district. Tourists from around the world put Del Mar on their "must see" list when visiting San Diego County. To promote tourism and encourage locals to shop locally, the Del Mar Village Association was awarded \$2,200 for a citywide banner program.

ENCINITAS

Let the flowers bloom!

Encinitas is known as the "Flower Capital of the World." Home to the poinsettia and the begonia, this city has a rich and colorful floral heritage. To promote this identity, the Encinitas Chamber of Commerce received \$1,000 for marketing the Encinitas Garden Festival, a colorful bouquet of fun!



Arts expands through the community

Encinitas also enjoys the benefits derived through its growing arts community, which ranges from artistic events to poetry jams. The Performing Arts Workshop will use its \$15,000 grant to further this artistic climate, presenting lectures and four performances in Encinitas.

LA JOLLA

Preventing a park from slipping away

Scripps Park is an important asset for La Jolla, for tourists and locals alike. The La Jolla Town Council will use a \$10,000 grant to retain a consultant and host a workshop that will culminate in recommendations to improve runoff and erosion control at the scenic park.

NORTH COUNTY

Stretching to a healthier life

Seniors understand the benefits of remaining limber and active as they enjoy their golden years. To further promote fitness, staff of Silver Age Yoga will use \$15,000 to provide health instruction to residents at several seniors centers throughout the district.

PACIFIC BEACH

Families and friends gather

Pacific Beach is more than a summer tourist designation or winter home for college students. This beachside community has a strong sense of identity that is a throwback to an earlier era. The Pacific Beach Town Council will use \$3,000 to further promote this identity through its annual "Concerts on the Green" series that bring families together.

SAN DIEGO

How football promotes tourism

College football has some of the most enthusiastic fans in the nation. The annual Holiday Bowl, held each December, brings teams to San Diego for a week of activities leading up to the big game, pumping millions of dollars into the local economy. The Pacific Life Holiday Bowl committee will use \$10,000 to continue its marketing and promotion of the 2005 Holiday Bowl.

Opening young minds through art

Children exposed to art grow up to live fuller, more productive lives. The California International Young Artists Competition garnered \$1,500 for its annual international competition and music outreach throughout San Diego County.

Encouraging self-sufficiency

Partners for Community Access provides services to the handicapped to ensure they remain active and productive in our society. The organization received \$1,000 for the purchase of a color laser printer.

It's Mozart!

Further enlightening San Diego's cultural heritage is the annual Mostly Mozart festival. To build upon last year's successful event, the Jean Isaacas' San Diego Dance Theater was granted \$72,500 to help stage the 2006 festival.

SOLANA BEACH

Look for great events at this library

Solana Beach has its own vibrant public library that provides numerous services and activities for community members. The Solana Beach Friends of the Library earned a \$27,000 grant that will be used for promotional and outreach materials, development of a literacy program, continuation of the "Noches de Familia" program, presentation of several seminars, and the purchase of portable microphone and speakers for public events.

PAM'S PERSPECTIVE

Demonstrating Sensible Environmental Leadership

I recently purchased a Toyota Prius, the hybrid gas-electric vehicle that gets fantastic gas mileage, for official use while on county business. As chairwoman of the Board of Supervisors, I want to set an example that it is time for the county to embrace new technology and break away from its SUVs and low-mileage vehicles where possible.

I realize some people could see this announcement as another example of environmental na-

ivety. After all, what type of savings is there in converting just one vehicle in the county fleet?

That is the cynicism that must be transformed. Change occurs one event, one person, one attitude, at a time. This county has a realistic goal of converting at least 25 percent of its fleet of vehicles to hybrids or alternative fuel by 2012.

The Board of Supervisors in March adopted a policy to switch the county's gas-consuming vehicles to gas-saving vehicles.

The staff of Supervisor Pam Slater-Price

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Supervisor Slater-Price models the Toyota Prius that serves as her office's staff vehicle. The gas/electric hybrid gets a combined city-highway rating of over 55 miles per gallon of gas.

The expected annual gas savings is \$786 per vehicle, assuming the cost of a gallon gasoline does not climb further.

The County of San Diego requires many of its employees, staff members, to attend meetings, forums, community events and other activities. My staff attends functions from downtown San Diego east to Allied Gardens-Del Cerro, north to Encinitas and, inland, to Escondido.

Driving one high-mileage hybrid not only makes sense, it saves taxpayer dollars, especially now when gas is approaching three dollars per gallon.

The alternative - not going to events or meetings - is simply not acceptable to me. I was elected to represent the people of the Third District. As supervisor I

take pride in being accessible and seen in my district.

It is up to each and every one of us to do what we can to conserve our precious resources. Reducing our consumption of foreign oil is paramount to our country's economic future.

Ideally, hybrid vehicles will one day dominate our roads as commuters embrace the cost-savings benefits.

As an elected official, I want to set an example, even if it allows some outlets to poke fun at me. More people now understand the advantages of driving a hybrid.

And who knows, maybe some media outlets will begin converting their fleets.